

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF

LAVINIA L. DOCK



GERMAN REGISTRATION

Sister Agnes Rarll, in a recent number of the *German Nurses, Journal* discusses editorially the passage of the recently secured Registration Act in Germany. She says that although it only fixes one year's training yet it must be regarded as a substantial reform, because so many influences have been at work creating deplorable conditions in German nursing, that numerous three-months' and six-weeks' pretended courses of training have sprung into existence. It seems that even in Germany, the home of scientific education and thoroughness, the pecuniary profits in exploiting nurses and their work have been discerned, and grasped—sometimes by pure charlatans posing as Masseur-Nurses and Health-Doctors; sometimes, it is most discouraging to know, by reputable physicians themselves, who have condescended to a quackery in nursing that they would resent in medicine. Sister Agnes thinks the prospects now most hopeful, and as the German government has a way of having its law obeyed, we are sure that secular, educated nurses in Germany will now have a rising tide of progress.

The German Registration Act is in some points an encouraging, in others a sadly discouraging, document. It is good on its practical technical side, but a perfect sample of Old World matter-of-course autocracy in its ignoring of the worker as anything but a cog in the wheel. Not a shadow of representation or sharing in conclusions is accorded to the nurses.

It is excellently practical and presupposes no small amount of medical knowledge. The demonstration test is the most unusual and interesting feature of the bill. For this the applicants (not more than six are examined in one group) are placed for three days in a hospital designated, when the examination is held. Here they each are put in charge of a patient for the greater part of the three days, including one night duty. There are, further, demonstrations in surgery, first aid, bathing, operating-room technique and assistance, etc.

The main features of the act are: The general control is given to the civil governments of the states, and training-schools in state hospitals (or in those recognized by the state in this respect) are eligible to send graduates to the state examination. Just what lines the state will draw in granting recognition, or how it will investigate or inspect, is not set forth.

The civil authorities will select the physicians, three in a group, who will conduct the examinations on lines closely specified in the Act.

One year's training course is required, but exceptions may be made of nurses who have not studied in recognized schools, but who in the judgment of the civil authorities have had equivalent training.

The defects of this bill are obvious, prominent being the limitation to one year, which is very possibly due to a wish to let all the military and naval service men through (for they figure prominently).

Every one knows that a one-year's course means a superficial training. As a matter of fact, all of the best German schools, though counting only one year for training, give their nurses from three to five years' hospital service.

The good thing in the German situation is that government officials in Germany are of a high type of civic virtue and work from a sense of duty and public responsibility. "Graft" and "pull" are all but unknown, and the German law will be administered seriously. Some of the most sympathetic and liberal supporters of nursing reform in Germany are laymen in high official positions.

The best medical men there also often in practise accord to the women nurses a consideration that they would perhaps not be willing to see on paper, for in Germany, as in some places nearer home, the men like to seem to be doing everything of their own motion. As we have formerly mentioned, certain medical men in Germany have sinned against ethics and good standards in nursing, by yielding to the commercial temptation, and thus a certain amount of odium has attached to them as well as to the victims of their sham courses.

These bogus courses will have an emphatic set-back under the new law.

THE ENGLISH REGISTRATION MOVEMENT

A DEPUTATION of representative nurses, medical men, and lay supporters of registration was received early in March by the president of the Privy Council, the Earl of Crewe, who gave a sympathetic